

IRS MAKES INFORMATION FROM 527 GROUPS AVAILABLE ON INTERNET

WASHINGTON -- The Internal Revenue Service on Friday announced the first public release of the new forms filed by section 527 political organizations.

The IRS has started posting the new Form 8871 submitted by 527 organizations across the nation. As of Friday, the IRS has received more than 4,900 paper forms. These notices of organization can be reached through the IRS web site at www.irs.gov/bus_info/eo/8871.html

The public release comes within weeks of a new law approved by Congress and signed by President Clinton on July 1. The legislation creates a new set of rules for political organizations described in section 527 of the Internal Revenue Code. Under the new law, most of these 527 groups will be required to publicly disclose details about their organization, contributors, expenditures and other information.

"We worked hard to make the new disclosure forms available to the public at the earliest point possible," said Evelyn Petschek, Commissioner of the Tax Exempt and Government Entities Division.

The tax agency anticipates posting more of these notices of organization on a daily basis. The images are available in a Portable Document Format (PDF) format that many personal computers can access.

After reaching the web site for these forms, visit the index (titled 00-index.txt) for an alphabetical listing of the groups and their corresponding Employer Identification Number (EIN). Then return to the main directory and use the EIN to link to individual organizations.

"Despite our tight deadlines, we worked hard to make this information available sooner, not later," Petschek said.

The IRS will continue working in the weeks ahead to improve this system. The IRS is exploring several improvements, including soon adding a keyword search capability.

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Form 8871, "Political Organization Notice of Section 527 Status," represents the organization's assertion it is a 527 organization. The form contains a variety of information, including the organization's purpose, a list of related entities, contact persons, record custodians, e-mail addresses and lists of officers, directors and highly compensated employees.

Many 527 organizations also must periodically file Form 8872, "Political Organization Report of Contributions and Expenditures." Groups filing Form 8872 list contributors of \$200 or more annually and expenditures of \$500 or more annually.

The IRS also plans to publicly release copies of Form 8872 soon. Details will be forthcoming. However, the vast majority of the filing activity so far has centered on Form 8871.

"This law posed some real challenges for the IRS," Petschek said. "But in less than five weeks, we created two entirely new forms, built a new processing system and provided the public timely access to this valuable information."

If 527 organizations have questions or need help, they can contact 1-877-829-5500. Media inquiries should be directed to the IRS Media Relations office at (202) 622-4000.

Several places on the IRS web site provide more information:

- General information and filing details can be obtained at www.irs.gov/prod/bus_info/eo/pol-file.html
- More details about Form 8871 are available in IRS News Release 2000-49, available at www.irs.gov/news/nandf.html
- More details about Form 8872 can be found in IRS News Release 2000-50, available at www.irs.gov/news/nandf.html

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